

Jones School
607 South Plymouth Court;
southeast corner of Harrison
Street and Plymouth Court
Chicago
Cook County
Illinois

HABS No. ILL-1019

HABS
ILL,
16-CHIG,
21-

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Washington Planning and Service Center
1730 North Lynn Street
Arlington, Virginia

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. ILL-1019

JONES SCHOOL

HABS
ILL,
16-CHIG,
21-

Location: 607 South Plymouth Court; southeast corner of Harrison Street and Plymouth Court, Chicago, Cook County, Illinois.

Present Owner: Chicago Board of Education.

Present Occupant: Jones Commercial High School.

Statement of Significance: Built in 1875, the building is a typical and unusually well-preserved example of school buildings of the period.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners (chain of title): Legal description of the property: Lots 26-32 of Block 136 in Subdivision of Block 136 in School Section Addition to Chicago, Section 16-39-14. The chain of title may be found in Book 468A, p. 80, in the Cook County Recorder's Office. The property has been continuously owned by the Chicago Board of Education.
2. Date of erection: 1875.
3. Original plans, construction, etc.: The present building was erected in 1875 to replace an earlier one built in 1873 and destroyed by fire in 1874 /A. T. Andreas, History of Chicago, Vol. 3 (Chicago: Published by the author, 1886), p. 143/. It is constructed of brick, has four stories and a basement; its plan measures 76 by 84 feet. The school was originally planned to seat 976 students. The building was heated by steam and its value, in 1886 including the heat apparatus and furniture, was \$42,000. The lot at Harrison Street and what was then called Third Avenue was at that time valued at \$21,875. It measures 175 by 100 feet /Ibid., pp. 144-145/.

B. Historical Events Connected with the Structure:

The original Jones School was built on the present site in 1844 /Industrial Chicago, Vol. 1 (Chicago: The Goodspeed Publishing Company, 1891), p. 90/. It was named in 1858 after William Jones, the first president of the Chicago Board of Education. The building served first as an elementary school

and then as a warehouse until it was converted to a Commercial high school in 1938 ["Jones Commercial Marks up 25 Years of Enviably Work," Chicago Daily News, March 23, 1963; "Jones Commercial High School," Union League Men and Events, Vol. 33, No. 3 (March, 1957), pp. 22-23/. The school is presently the only public commercial high school in Illinois. Its director since 1942 has been Clarence B. Carey. In the fall of 1962 the Board of Education announced plans for a new \$2,500,000 building and purchased 1.4 acres of land on Harrison and State Streets to use as a building site [Daily News, op. cit.]. The future role of the old Jones School building in these plans is as yet unknown.

C. Bibliography:

Andreas, A. T. History of Chicago. Vol. III. Chicago:
Published by the author, 1886. pp. 143-145.
School Board records and statistics.

Industrial Chicago. Vol. I. Chicago: The Goodspeed Publishing Company, 1891. p. 90.

"Jones Commercial High School," Union League Men and Events.
Vol. XXXIII, No. 3 (March, 1957). pp. 22-23, photograph
p. 23.

"Jones Commercial Marks up 25 Years of Enviably Work,"
Chicago Daily News, March 23, 1963.
Photograph. Clippings in the Library of the Chicago
Historical Society.

"Jones Trains Top Students for Commerce," Chicago American,
January 10, 1963.
Clippings in the Library of the Chicago Historical
Society.

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Osmund Overby
Supervisory Architect
National Park Service
August 1963

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: Built in 1875, this is an unusually well-preserved example of brick school buildings of the period.

2. Condition of fabric: Good.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: Rectangular, 84' (seven-bay west front) x 76' (six-bay north side); four stories on partially elevated basement.
2. Foundations: Do not show above grade.
3. Wall construction: Red, running-bond brick is painted gray. Three center bays on the west front project slightly. At the corners of the building and at either corner of the projecting center section are brick piers. On the west front there are continuous stone string courses at the first, second, and fourth floors. On the west front and north side, stone, semi-circular arches span the window openings.
4. Chimneys: A brick chimney at southeast corner projects beyond the south facade and the cornice.
5. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: The main entrance is at the center of the west (front) side; the large semi-circular arched opening is framed in stone, the door frame is wooden with a fan light; the wooden doors are later additions.
 - b. Windows: Most windows are six-over-six-light, double-hung wooden sash. The windows flanking the center bay of the projecting center section on the west front are four-over-four-light. All windows have arched upper sash, stone sills and (apparently) wooden architraves.
6. Roof:
 - a. Shape, covering: Low roof not visible from the ground.
 - b. Cornice, eaves: Heavy molded cornice with brackets and modillions.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: Central hall with stairways, classrooms off hallway around perimeter of building.
2. Stairways: Simple wooden stairways in central hall area.
3. Flooring: Wooden or later tile flooring.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Plaster.

5. Doorways and doors: Paneled doors, simple molded wooden trim.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: The building faces west at the southeast corner of Harrison Street and Plymouth Court in the downtown area of Chicago. It is on a somewhat open lot, set back from the sidewalk on both the north and west sides, with a parking lot on the south side and an alley on the east.
2. Landscaping: The lot is enclosed by an iron fence on the north and west (front) sides. There is an informal lawn with shrubs and trees on north and west (front) sides.

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September 1963